



City of Salisbury
DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
March 14, 2019

Committee Members Present

Timothy Meagher, *Chairperson*
Gregory Tyler
Michael Dyer
Amy Crouse
Stephen Bullock
Dr. Katherine Jones

Committee Members Absent

Barbara Bell

In Attendance

Laura Baasland, *Mayor's Office Administrative Assistant*
Virginia Bender
Will Fried

The Disability Advisory Committee met at 3:00pm in Conference Room #300 of the GOB

Call to Order

The Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting was called to order at 3:04pm by Mr. Meagher.

Introductions and Welcome

The meeting began with brief introductions of all in attendance, and greetings for the guests, as well as a brief description of the DAC.

Last Meeting Minutes Review

The minutes from the DAC's last meeting on December 13, 2018 were reviewed. On a motion put forth by Mr. Tyler and seconded by Mr. Bullock, the minutes were approved by unanimous vote in favor.

Guest: Will Fried

Mr. Fried introduced himself and briefly explained the work he is doing. Mr. Fried is a student at Salisbury University, and an intern in the Mayor's Office. Additionally, he is a representative of an advocate for the Autism Spectrum Disorder community. Mr. Fried discussed having some transportation concerns, and Mr. Meagher acknowledge his concerns and relayed that the Committee has discussed transportation access issues in the past. Mr. Meagher referred Mr. Fried to the staff at Shore Transit who are designated to help the public with accessibility to public transportation.

Committee History

Following Mr. Fried's introduction, the Committee discussed their history and what has led to the legitimacy of the group. The responsibility of the DAC has remained the same since the

group's inception, because their true charge is to embrace the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and assist the City of Salisbury with doing so.

Members mentioned that the Committee was renamed some time ago to reflect the fact that the group serves in an advisory capacity. Previously, the DAC has focused on making the City Council fully aware that the group exists, and up until December 2018, making City department heads aware also. In the past, the group has also addressed infrastructure.

Mrs. Baasland read the DAC's missions statement aloud, and Mr. Meagher discussed Committee membership and who the members represent. Mrs. Baasland asked about historical representation, and Mr. Meagher spoke to the fact that the Committee has had representatives in the past with mobility concerns, housing concerns, and Shore Transit has come as guests and presented to the group when asked to do so. Mr. Tyler added that the group has advised on the accessibility of playgrounds, and has worked with the libraries. Mr. Fried inquired as to whether the group has ever had any representatives with mental disabilities, and Mr. Meagher responded that the group has not.

Mr. Tyler also discussed that the Committee has worked with the City on mapping and ensuring that the maps the City was putting together were readable and accessible.

Moving Forward as a Committee: Projects

Mr. Meagher addressed that at the December 2018 meeting, Dr. Jones asked if the Committee had ever taken on any projects. Dr. Jones expressed that she feels as though the Committee could do a project to gain more visibility in the community. She reiterated that she understands the group's advisory capacity and how recommendations are made to the Mayor, but that she would like to see the Committee being more active in the community going forward.

Ongoing Work at Peninsula Regional Medical Center (PRMC)

Mr. Tyler brought up a project that the local hospital, PRMC, is working on to make themselves more accessible to the disabled community using beacons. Prominent hospital officials think it's a great idea and are looking into it. The beacon is an RFID tag, which is an auditory sign. This "seeing-eye GPS" technology works similarly to a talking Garmin GPS. PRMC is actively working on this accessibility project and exploring the possibilities. Mr. Meagher asked if the Committee would like to formally make the Mayor aware of this work at PRMC. Ms. Crouse asked for more clarification about the software, and Mr. Tyler explained that it is something to be used outside as well as inside the hospital. Mr. Bullock stated that Ms. Crouse had pointed out the universal need for this type of accessibility, and mentioned that an app would be great.

Engaging the Youth

Dr. Jones expressed that she would like the Committee to encourage the youth to come to us and be our future civic leaders and attend meetings and be abreast of what is going on in their world. Dr. Jones made clear that some youth outreach would be great, and proposed the possibility of an honorary youth ambassadorship program.

Mr. Meagher asked Mr. Bullock, Ms. Crouse, and Dr. Jones if there are any possibilities in their realm of youth. Mr. Dyer mentioned a self-advocates group that focuses mostly on adults, the Eastern Shore Self-Advocacy Project, but thought that the Committee may want to get the word out about that group anyway, with the idea being to teach individuals to advocate in their own capacity. Mr. Dyer expressed that he will give that contact information to Mrs. Baasland so that she can distribute it to the group.

Mr. Bullock brought up the possibility of having a youth ambassador join us from the Wor-Wic Life Centered Employment and Education class, which is composed of post-secondary

students with special needs from the 3 lower counties of the Eastern Shore. Mr. Bullock explained that the Committee would seek a youth ambassador from Wicomico County who would hopefully also be a resident of the City of Salisbury. According to Mr. Bullock, this class has a self-advocacy component which would make representation on the DAC a very appropriate connection.

Dr. Jones again expressed that the DAC should be focusing a lot of information directly towards youth, which prompted Mr. Dyer to share a press release from the City of Cambridge Department of Public Works. Cambridge is working on using an ADA measuring stick to ensure clearance for accessibility. Mr. Meagher discussed the potential of this measuring stick to be an effective tool for businesses, and Dr. Jones inquired about the possibility of engaging the youth in a similar project since high school students in Cambridge are making these sticks. The press release is attached to these minutes for further review.

Accessibility and ADA Compliance

Mr. Fried contributed that the City of Salisbury isn't very pedestrian friendly, or accessible to those with disabilities. Mr. Meagher explained that if there a specific location or intersection that is an issue, the Committee can report that to the State Highway Administration (SHA) or the City of Salisbury. Ms. Crouse asked if the Committee would report that stop sign in the middle of the sidewalk near Mr. Dyer's workplace.

Ms. Bender asked the group if individuals are able to go directly to a City Council representative, and Mr. Meagher affirmed that they can, and that the Mayor's Office is another route.

ADA Compliance Coordinator

Mr. Meagher explained that the DAC has been reporting ADA concerns to the City, just not formally through a designated ADA Compliance Coordinator, and he expressed that the City and the DAC needs a formal protocol. Mr. Fried mentioned a woman he had worked with through Salisbury University who may be a resource in establishing a protocol: Dr. Diana Wagner.

Mr. Meagher expressed that he would like to make the State of Maryland aware of this group and the fact that the DAC exists, in the same way that they have done with the Salisbury City Council and individual City departments.

Dr. Jones reported that all of the staff at the Bay Area Center for Independent Living (BACIL) completes an "ADA Basics" training course and is issued a certificate. The entire Committee expressed interest in the training, and Dr. Jones said that she would send the information to Mrs. Baasland to share with the Committee.

Establishing Committee Priorities

The Committee discussed their priorities as a group moving forward now that they have met with all department heads, and it was promptly determined that it should be addressed that Mrs. Baasland is the City's ADA Compliance Coordinator and she should receive training and develop a protocol for handling such concerns. Ms. Bender requested that Mrs. Baasland be listed on the City website as the ADA Compliance Coordinator, and the rest of the Committee mentioned it would be a good idea to have a press release done identify Mrs. Baasland as the ADA Compliance Officer so that they public was made aware. There is a stop sign in the middle of the sidewalk at an intersection near Mr. Dyer's place of work, the United Needs and Abilities agency, on the most easterly corner of E. Main Street and Glen Avenue, that he has previously mentioned to the Committee, and the Committee decided to bring it to Mrs. Baasland's attention as the ADA Compliance Coordinator and requested that she address it and get it resolved. This was done not only to fix the long-standing issue, but also to test the City's protocol for handling ADA concerns.

Dr. Jones and the rest of the group also prioritized engaging youth by inviting them to meeting and exploring the feasibility of a youth mentoring or ambassadorship program.

The Committee decided that their work before the next meeting would be for every member to complete the ADA training that Dr. Jones mentioned.

Next Meeting

The Committee discussed Ms. Bell's suggestion to have Kathleen Walker come to a meeting to give a presentation. Ms. Walker has initiated a Maryland Lower Shore Community of Practice for supporting Families, self-advocates, local school systems, health departments, law enforcement, and provider agencies in an effort support those individuals or families of an individual with a disability. The Committee liked this idea and agreed that it would be a good idea to invite Ms. Walker to the next meeting. The next DAC meeting will be held on Thursday, June 13, 2019, at 3pm in the Government Office Building.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Bullock and seconded by Ms. Crouse and passed by unanimous vote in favor, the DAC meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm.

Minutes Recorded By:



Laura Baasland, Mayor's Office Administrative Assistant

**News Release March 4, 2019
City of Cambridge, Maryland**

**ADA COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE TO LAUNCH
ACCESSIBILITY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**



Gracie Turner, age 10

The City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Committee is spearheading an Accessibility Awareness Campaign to encourage business owners, citizens, and city government to make Cambridge fully welcoming and accessible to persons with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination and ensures people with disabilities are provided the same safe and accessible opportunities in schools, transportation, and public places.

The Cambridge ADA Compliance Committee's first campaign will focus on fostering compliant accessibility in the Downtown Business District. Optimizing access to our shops and restaurants will not only benefit residents with disabilities, but also attract more customers to local businesses -- especially as Cambridge becomes recognized as an engaging and accommodating travel destination.

To kick off the Accessibility Awareness Campaign, city employees designed a simple, easy-to-use measuring tool, called the ADA Clearance Stick, to help business owners establish safe travel paths outside their stores.

Vocational carpentry students from the Dorchester County Career and Technology Center then stepped up to implement the design and creation of the 4-foot-long measuring sticks, which will be distributed to business owners as the first step towards a goal of making Cambridge one of the most accessible, walkable and hospitable cities on the Eastern Shore.

Staff and members of the ADA Committee will present the ADA Clearance Measuring Stick to city council at its regular meeting on March 11, at 6 p.m. in City Council Chambers at 305 Gay Street.

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